DRAFT

MEMORANDUM FOR: CIA Member, IHC

FROM   :   H. C. Eisenbeiss
                  Director of Central Reference

SUBJECT   :   Preliminary Conclusions for the Study of
                  Community Bibliographic Service

1.   We have reviewed subject document, which was produced by

25X1A   ██████████████████████████████ We acknowledge that it is a

preliminary draft and only a summary of the actual findings, but--given

that--we find it to be a shallow effort--particularly considering the

several millions of dollars that would be needed to implement what

25X1A   ██████████ recommends. We find that the study is also flawed by errors

that apparently have come about through misunderstandings of the CIA

systems and their operating environment, by a methodology that over-

emphasized the collection of data, by assumptions that are questionable

and reflect a bias towards certain approaches, by a conclusion that has

no supporting evidence, and by recommendations that reflect incomplete

study. (U)

2.   The contractor's primary recommendation is for direct, on-line

access to the current RECON data base by selected,cleared analysts in

the Community. The recommendation is based on cost estimates that are

not substantiated (and compare favorable against misrepresented CIA

estimates) and on a misunderstanding of serious security limitations in

Community access to RECON. The recommendation also addresses only part

of the CIA proposal. It is not clear whether off-line access to ADSTAR should also be provided, and the contractor sets aside the question of Community requirements for expanded RECON coverage in source material and depth of indexing. The question of coverage has major resource implications and should not be postponed. (U)

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3. While the study addresses costs of the ███████ recommendations, nothing in the recommendations touches on how the proposal will be funded. In paragraph 9 of the study, the comment is made that CIA has indicated that it has no resources to provide Community bibliographic services. This is only part of the story. Our original proposal stated, at the insistence of the DDCI, that resources to expand and upgrade existing systems to serve the needs of other Community agencies "should be provided by those agencies." Any proposal that does not address this cost reimbursable approach will be a new proposal that will require DDCI approval. (U)

4. In general we feel that the study needs further work to more completely define Community requirements and to better represent costs and problems involved in implementing the CIA proposals. The following paragraphs discuss our concerns. (U)

Contractor Errors

5. From the beginning we have been concerned about the contractor's methodology, which we feel has led him to overemphasize the collection

of data--to the detriment of analysis and understanding--and consequently
to misunderstand the nature of the systems under study. This has led to
errors in his preliminary statements. There is one early example. In
September 1979, we were asked to review the preliminary statistical

25X1A   tables compiled by ██████████. We found several errors that demonstrated
a misunderstanding of our systems. For example, one set of data we
provided was completely misread, and, based on this misreading, ████████ 25X1A
presented an erroneous table of data. In addition, footnotes on other
tables showed a poor understanding of what our data represented. (U)

25X1A   6.   The ████████ preliminary conclusions paper also contains
errors. Some examples:

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--   ████████ maintains that the CIA proposal was in response
to the analyst support study (paragraph 2). This is not
so. CIA made its proposal before the findings of the
analyst support study were known. (U)

--   Paragraph 3 states that ADSTAR is part of the SAFE
project. ADSTAR is a separate system which, hopefully,
will be available to SAFE users, using the new communi-
cations system being developed for SAFE, but it will
remain a separate system available to both SAFE and non-
SAFE users. (U)

--   In the discussion of the RECON extracts currently within
COINS (paragraph 4, sixth subparagraph), the study creates

the impression that there is only one extract--for
finished intelligence--and that all RECON finished
intelligence bibliographic references are available in
COINS. Neither is true. There are three other limited
extracts (two for SIGINT and one for intelligence reports

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███████. Each of these extracts has a limited date
span (the finished intelligence extract covers only a
24 month period). (C)

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-- Part of the rationale for the ███████ recommendation to
accept the CIA proposal on RECON rests on a misunderstanding
of the security limitations we face. In paragraph 8, the
study dismisses security problems because of the "limited"
nature of a RECON record, as opposed to a full text
record. The study assumes that fully cleared reference
analysts in other agencies would have no problem in
accessing all of RECON. This reflects a misunderstanding
of several factors: 1) that the RECON record is an
enhanced document title often containing sensitive
information from the document text; 2) that this enhanced
title, at the request of the document originator, must
carry the same controls as the document; and 3) that OCR,
as the custodian of the system, must respect the require-
ments of the document originator in order to have a
system that is worthwhile. To accomplish what the study
suggests would involve changing the attitudes of a number
of offices and agencies--no small effort in this time of
greater concern for security. (C)

-- In its cost estimates for the implementation of RECON,

25X1A ████████ reflects a poor understanding of the CIA

proposal for direct on-line access to RECON (paragraph 9).

Each of the five options presented by CIA represents a

spectrum of activity (and costs) that are dependent on

the amount and type of service requested. All of our

cost estimates were for the high end of the spectrum,

viz. the most costly. For the direct on-line RECON

25X1A option, which ████████ addresses, we assumed that we

would have to add additional documents both to our index

and our document storage; we also assumed more in-depth

indexing as a requirement since RECON was designed for

CIA needs not DoD's, State's or NSA's. The ████████   25X1A

recommendation is for direct on-line access to RECON

without changing the present sources for RECON or the

level of indexing. This would eliminate the need for

some 15 personnel in our original estimate. It would

not, however, eliminate the need for 15 others involved

in computer operation, programming and user interface

(requirements coordination)--which was part of our

original estimate. This represents a serious omission. (U)

Contractor Methodology

7.   As we have indicated above, we are concerned by the contractor's

emphasis on the collection of data. We have sensed a desire by the

contractor to have a substantial mass of data to validate the objectivity

of his study of a contentious issue. While this desire for objectivity

is commendable, we do have some concern about the contractor's analysis

of the data. In the contractor's preliminary statistics, we not only

provided corrections to the data, but we also suggested that the contractor

analyze the data supplied by other agencies. NSA, for example, reported

that it had 61% more CIA finished intelligence documents on file than

CIA reported. We also suggested--because we sensed that various agencies

were using different ground rules in reporting data--that more caveats

be added to the statistical study to better define what the reported

figures represented--lest future readers be mislead. We have not seen,

by the way, the corrected statistical data. (C)

8. Two other aspects of the contractor's methodology bother us:

-- Central to the contractor's approach was the assumption
   that each agency's requirements for a central bibliographic
   index are reflected in their own systems, and that a
   comparison of each system against RECON would determine
   if RECON satisfied the needs of each agency. What this
   approach does is to compare RECON, a bibliographic index
   designed specifically to provide a generalized retrospective
   search capability for all documents of intelligence
   interest with other systems, loosely defined as bibliographic,
   that were established to support specific agency systems
   primarily for handling their own documents (SOLIS, for
   example, is as much a current mail file as it is a
   mechanism for retrospective search). The CIA proposal
   asked that the IHC study whether RECON (and ADSTAR)

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"would serve the Community's interests" not whether RECON
compared favorably with other Community systems. Paragraph 4
of the ████████ study states that RECON has notable
shortfalls in US SIGINT field reports, State cables and
open source literature. These documents were deliberately
omitted from RECON because ⌈of⌋ their content was not of
that much interest to CIA. They represent the additional
documents discussed in the CIA proposal that would have
to be added to meet Community needs. An extensive study
was not necessary to document the obvious. The contractor's
time would have been better spent by determining to what
extent these shortfalls decreased the desirability of
RECON. (C)

--   From the beginning the contractor has been overly concerned
with defining the costs of the CIA proposals. Implicit
in our proposal was the understanding that realistic
costs can only be developed once the Community requirements
are known. As stated above, we do not feel that the
contractor has clearly defined these requirements. In
his cost estimates, the contractor has not only misrepre-
sented CIA cost estimates, he also has not offered
supporting rationale for his own cost estimates. We feel
that this extensive effort to provide cost data is
misleading and premature. What should be first determined
is whether the Community finds RECON feasible and useful
~~desirable~~ as a Community bibliographic index, managed by

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CIA on a cost reimbursable basis, and--if so--in what

configuration. (U)

Questionable Assumptions

9.   Two assumptions appear to represent pre-existing points of

view that have led the contractor to his findings and recommendations.

The first of these assumptions is that a free text search and retrieval

capability is better than a "labor intensive" index search capability.

This is reflected in paragraphs 4 (subparagraphs two and four) and 7.

The contrast of "labor intensive" RECON with a supposedly labor saving

free text system such as SOLIS is misleading. For example, SOLIS costs

10 workyears just for the editing function (OCR has 17 indexers for

RECON). The contractor does not address the total costs of systems in

his comparisons, nor does he attempt to compare the costs of a bibliographic

index cum ADSTAR versus a free text search and retrieval. Rather, he

suggests that free text search and retrieval is the only answer overlooking

its inability to handle "conceptual" queries. The contractor apparently

sees no inconsistency in his concern for the "labor intensive" nature of

RECON and his desire that the central bibliographic index being developed

for SAFE becomes an integral part of "the Community bibliographic system." (C)

10. The second assumption that we question is that long range

Community needs are best addressed by distributed bibliographic responsibilities

(paragraph 7). In recommending this approach, the contractor is reviving

a proposal made by another contractor (███████████) to the IHC in 1977

for a functionally interdependent approach to information handing. This

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approach was discussed in the Library Facilities Working Group of the
IHC, but no agreement was reached on implementation. CIA, at the time,
objected to the proposal because of its general nature and provided an
extensive paper raising a variety of questions on costs and management

25X1A of such an approach. ███████, in resurrecting the ████ proposal, 25X1A
provides some questionable costs (60-75 additional people) for a centralized
bibliographic index managed by CIA and proposes a distributed approach
as the "most feasible solution" without addressing the limitations of
such an approach. SOLIS, for example, is limited to SIGINT documents
and does not contain sensitive materials, and CIRC II, as the analyst
support study pointed out, is woefully slow--both in input of materials
and in response. The distributed approach also ignores the variety of
limitations imposed on such a system by present security practices, and
the major question of how such a system can be managed. The raising of
this long-range proposal of questionable validity complicates what
should be a relatively simple study. (C)

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11. The ████████ recommendations are addressed in paragraph 12.
Our comments are as follows:

-- The first recommendation does not agree with the paper's
discussion in paragraph 9, which suggests the acceptance
of both the direct on-line access to RECON and the off-
line access to ADSTAR. Which is ████████ recommending: 25X1A
RECON, or RECON cum ADSTAR? This recommendation, for
whichever configuration, addresses only part of the CIA

25X1A proposal. In ████████ second recommendation, the
scope and coverage of RECON is set aside for further

study. With the substantial resource and space implications involved, the Community requirements for RECON (viz., source coverage and depth of indexing) should be determined before implementation. The scope of RECON coverage has major implications for document storage and computer storage and processing capacity. It would be more economical to reach agreement on this now rather than try to add to RECON's coverage at a later date. We recommend that the contractor study this further before presenting his findings. (U)

-- The third recommendation glosses over security limitations that make its implementation almost impossible, as we have discussed above. The contractor needs to spell out the realities of the security implications not to make a recommendation that ignores these realities. (U)

-- The fourth recommendation talks to a future IHC concern that has little place in a study which should focus on the CIA proposal. This recommendation should be dropped. (U)

-- The fifth recommendation says, in effect, that direct on-line access to ADSTAR is too expensive. What is there left to study? (U)

-- The sixth recommendation reflects an assumption throughout this paper that SAFE will/should become a Community

system. SAFE is a joint CIA/DIA project providing a variety of functions to support production; the bibliographic index which is only one part will be for CIA. To talk of any eventual Community involvement in SAFE is premature. SAFE needs to be operational first. At that time, costs, security and a wealth of other factors can be studied. We were not privy to the conversations between

25X1A ▮▮▮▮▮▮ and the SAFE project monitors, but we feel that paragraph 5 of this study misrepresents what these monitors said. The attempt to rewrite SAFE requirements at this time to ensure a Community bibliographic system would add additional costs to the project and further delay the project. (U)

H. C. Eisenbeiss

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